At around the same time as Ebert became the President of the Weimer government; Hitler joined the German Worker’s Party, quickly rising through the ranks and renaming it the National Socialist German Worker’s Party, The Nazi Party.

During his time in prison following the failed Beer Hall Putsch, Hitler was able to write Mein Kampf which spread his ideas across Germany and gained him huge support and publicity.

- Hitler aimed to create the perfect German race
- He wanted to abolish the Treaty of Versailles
- Acquisition of Lebensraum- take control of more territory in order to support the German population
- He aimed to exterminate sub-human races such as the Jews

‘The peoples suffering he would transform cold bloodedly and immediately, into political support for his own ambitions’- William Shirer

The Nazis:

- The Nazis exploited:
  - The state of poverty within Germany due to the Great depression
  - The feelings of nostalgia for the ‘glory days’ of the Kaiser, with it the state of moral decline which Germany was in during the Weimer days
  - The humiliation of the first World War, Hitler especially appealed to war veterans who had literally lost their face to gas attacks in WWI
  - He appealed to war veterans also because they didn’t appreciate the French occupying the Ruhr
- He promised to regain face, promised bread, work and freedom

Totalitarianism: the aim and the extent to which it was achieved

Reichstag Fire:

- After the Reichstag elections in July 1932, the Nazis were the largest single-party but not a majority party
- Hitler demanded to be Chancellor from Hindenburg
- Hindenburg refused as he was suspicious of Hitler
- Chancellor Franz Von Papen called for another election in November 1932
- The Nazis again came out as the largest party but had lost more than 2 million votes and 38 seats in the Reichstag
- Hindenburg refused to appoint Hitler again in December 1932 and instead appointed Kurt Von Schleicher
- It was clear that the Weimar system wasn’t working
- In January 1933, Hitler was appointed Chancellor
- With only a few Nazis in the cabinet and Von Papen as Vice Chancellor, Von Papen and Hindenburg were confident that they could limit Hitler’s influence and resist his extremist demands
- After his appointment as Chancellor, Hitler took steps to complete a Nazi takeover of Germany
- Hitler called for another election in order to try and get an overall Nazi majority in the Reichstag
- On February 1933, the Reichstag was set ablaze